

**PORTLAND
CENTER STAGE
AT THE ARMORY**

MEDIA CONTACT:
Andrea Vernae
503-445-3757
andreav@pcs.org

MEDIA RELEASE

George Bailey Takes the Stage at PCS in *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*, an Inventive Reimagining of the Beloved Holiday Story



Previews Begin Nov. 19 | Opening Night is Nov. 25 | Closes Dec. 24

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November 7, 2022 — PORTLAND, OR. George Bailey, Clarence, and the Bedford Falls community will come to life at Portland Center Stage this holiday season, in a fresh, inventive reimagining of the beloved holiday story. *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* will begin preview performances on November 19, open on November 25, and run through December 24 on the U.S. Bank Main Stage. Tickets are on sale now.

PCS Associate Artistic Director Chip Miller will direct this ensemble of local favorites, featuring John San Nicolas as George Bailey and other roles and Treasure Lunan as Clarence and other roles. Merideth Kaye Clark, Jimmy Garcia, Jamie M. Rea, and Ashley Song will complete the ensemble, in roles that range from contemporary radio personalities to iconic Bedford Falls characters, and more. The performers will also help in the creation of a full range of live, playful sound effects and original music that will lift up the show.

It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play was adapted by Joe Landry from the 1943 story *The Greatest Gift* by Philip Van Doren Stern — which also inspired the now-classic 1946 holiday film *It's a Wonderful Life*. Joe Landry's stage version had its world premiere in 1996 at Stamford Center for the Arts in Connecticut. *BroadwayWorld* has raved that it's a "marvelous show that will please the entire family ... the radio play is entirely faithful to the classic story."

"It is such a pleasure to come together in this festive season and dive deep into this beloved holiday classic. My hope is to create a production that is a love letter to the theater, the radio play, and the *Wonderful* film. I think there is a George Bailey inside of all of us, and I am so excited to work with this amazing group of collaborators to tap into that energy," said director Chip Miller.

ABOUT THE PLAY

Reimagined for the stage as a live radio broadcast, idyllic Bedford Falls is brought to life with an exciting ensemble cast, gorgeous music, lavish costumes, and delightful live sound effects. Small-town everyman George Bailey is having a Christmas Eve that can only be saved by a miracle. Enter George's guardian angel, Clarence, who takes him on a heartwarming journey of redemption proving that "no one is a failure who has friends."

SPECIAL EVENTS

[**The People's Party: BIPOC Affinity Night for *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play***](#)

Wed. Dec. 14, 6:30 p.m. • Sliding scale tickets w/ FREE pre- & post-show offerings

The People's Party: BIPOC Affinity Nights are a mindful curation of an environment meant to center the experience of people who identify as part of the BIPOC community (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) — dedicated to generating a space for BIPOC individuals to engage with the performance in ways that are authentic to them.

[It's a Wonderful Night: A Holiday Soiree in Support of PCS](#)

Fri. Dec 16, 5 p.m. • \$250 (dinner, show & post-show party), \$150 (show & post-show party)

Get dressed up and come eat, drink, dance, and enjoy a magical evening of holiday merriment. You'll be treated to delicious dining, fabulous music, a performance of *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*, and dancing into the winter's night — all to celebrate and raise money for Portland Center Stage!

ADAPTOR JOE LANDRY

Joe Landry's plays have been produced across the country and internationally, including *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*, *Reefer Madness*, *Vintage Hitchcock: A Live Radio Play*, *Eve & Co.*, *Beautiful*, *Hollywood Babylon*, and *Numb*. Joe attended Playwright's Horizons/New York University, founded Second Guess Theatre Company in Connecticut, and is a member of the Dramatists Guild of America. He is currently developing new projects for the stage and screen.

DIRECTOR CHIP MILLER

Chip Miller is a director, producer, and associate artistic director at Portland Center Stage. They were previously the artistic associate/resident director at KCRep. Directing: *Rent*, August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, the world premiere of *Redwood* (Portland Center Stage); Larry Owens' *Sondhemia* (Carnegie Hall); *Journeys to Justice* (Portland Opera); *School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play*, *Welcome to Fear City*, *Sex with Strangers*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, (KCRep); the world premiere of *Becoming Martin* by Kevin Willmott (The Coterie); *dwb: driving while black* (Lawrence Arts Center, Baruch Performing Arts Center); *4:48 Psychosis* (The Buffalo Room). Chip has developed work with playwrights including Kevin Willmott, Kara Lee Corthron, Brittany K. Allen, Catherine Trieschmann, Darren Canady, Andrew Rosendorf, Susan Kander and Roberta Gumbel, Michelle T. Johnson, and Michael Finke. They have developed work at The William Inge Theatre Festival, NYU's New Plays for Young

Audiences, La Jolla Playhouse's DNA Series, Portland Center Stage's JAW New Play Festival, The Midwest Dramatists Center, KCRep's OriginKC New Works Festival, The Living Room Theatre, and Musical Theatre Heritage.

THE CAST

This fierce ensemble of six are familiar faces to the Portland arts community. Jimmy Garcia (*Hombres* at Artists Repertory Theatre) plays Actor 1; John San Nicolas (*F#@&ing A* at Shaking the Tree) plays Actor 2; Ashley Song (*Rent* at PCS) plays Actor 3; Jamie M. Rea (*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* at PCS) plays Actor 4; Treasure Lunan (*Chicken & Biscuits* at Portland Playhouse) plays Actor 5; and Merideth Kaye Clark (*Winter Song* at PCS) plays Actor 6.

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Director Chip Miller (*Rent*) is joined by Scenic Designer Peter Kasander (*Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*); Costume Designer Wanda Walden (*the ripple, the wave that carried me home*); Lighting Designer Alexz Trent Eccles (*Beauty and the Beast* at Northwest Children's Theatre); Sound Designer Phil Johnson (August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean*); with Associate Sound Designer and Composer Matt Rowning; Associate Director Isaac Lamb, Stage Manager Janine Vanderhoff, and Assistant Stage Manager Dana Petersen.

TICKET AND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

When: November 19 - December 24, 2022*

***Opening Night/Press Night:** Friday, November 25, at 7:30 p.m.

Preview Performances: November 19, 20, 22, and 23 at 7:30 p.m.

Pay What You Will Performances: Sun, Nov 20, at 7:30 p.m. and Thu, Dec 8, at 7:30 p.m.

The People's Party: BIPOC Affinity Night: Wed., Dec. 14, at 7:30 p.m.

Where: On the U.S. Bank Main Stage at The Armory, 128 NW Eleventh Ave, Portland, OR.

To Purchase Regular Tickets: Prices range from \$25 to \$98 and tickets may be purchased at pcs.org/its-a-wonderful-life-a-live-radio-play, 503.445.3700, or in-person from the box office.

Prices vary by date and time and are subject to change.

Ticket Specials: Visit pcs.org/deals to view ticket specials, including Rush Tickets, Pay What You Will, Arts for All, Active Duty, Military Veteran, Student, Under 30, The Armory Card, Groups of 10+, and more.

Please Note: This production is recommended for ages 8 and up. It contains adult situations, conversations about suicide, loud noises, and gunfire. *We can all help! The [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) is a hotline for individuals in crisis or for those looking to help someone else. To speak with a certified listener, call 1-800-273-8255.*

Accessibility: Learn about accessibility options at pcs.org/access.

PORTLAND CENTER STAGE

[Portland Center Stage's](#) mission is to create transcendent theatrical experiences and community programs that break down the barriers separating people. We support our community in celebrating the full scope of humanity, appreciating difference, and fostering belonging. PCS was established in 1988 as a branch of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and became independent in 1994. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Marissa Wolf and Interim Managing Director Liam Kaas-Lentz, the company produces a mix of classic, contemporary, and world premiere productions, along with a variety of high-quality education and community programs. As part of its dedication to new play development, the company has produced 28 world premieres, many of which were developed at its JAW New Play Festival. PCS's home is The Armory, a historic building originally constructed in 1891. After a major renovation, The Armory opened in 2006 as the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, the first performing arts venue in the country, and the first building in Portland to achieve a LEED Platinum rating.

Portland Center Stage is committed to identifying and interrupting instances of racism and all forms of oppression, through the principles of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA). Learn more at pcs.org/idea.

[Portland Center Stage's 2022-2023 season](#) is funded in part by Season Superstars the Regional Arts and Culture Council and the James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation; Season Sponsors the

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